



**Office of the Attorney General
Paul G. Summers**

**Department of Commerce and Insurance
Commissioner Anne Pope**

NEWS RELEASE

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Attorneys General reach agreement with Pfizer regarding Zithromax claims

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers along with 18 other Attorneys General, have reached an agreement with Pfizer regarding questionable advertising of its Zithromax product. Pfizer will pay the states involved a total of \$4 million dollars for costs and attorneys fees as part of the agreement, the attorneys general announced today.

Pfizer will also fund \$2 million in public service announcements during the next three cold seasons (November through March). The \$4 million for costs and attorneys fees will be divided among the participating states with Tennessee's share being \$127,273.00. As part of the agreement, Pfizer admitted no wrongdoing.

The Attorneys General alleged that the advertisements misrepresented the efficacy of Zithromax in comparison to other antibiotics used to treat children's severe ear infections. In addition to the advertisements to consumers, the Attorneys General also reviewed the promotional Zithromax materials Pfizer directed at health care professionals. The complaint alleged Pfizer focused on the dosing convenience and reduced frequency of use of the product without disclosing that various factors, such as antibiotic resistance, need to be considered when a physician chooses an antibiotic for treatment of severe ear infections.

“We hope consumers will discuss various products with their physicians to treat their children rather than demanding their doctors prescribe something they saw advertised on television,” Attorney General Summers said. “The same drug is not always the best for everyone in every situation and we want consumers to have all the information they need before making a decision on treatment.”

The major focus of the Pfizer-funded PSAs will tell parents they need to take into consideration a number of factors before choosing a medicine. Among those factors are whether there is an antibiotic resistance and how often the medication should be taken.

As part of the agreement, Pfizer is prohibited from making certain claims about Zithromax without specific disclosures about the product. If Zithromax ads relating to Zithromax dosing convenience, frequency of use or effectiveness, refer to scientific studies, Pfizer must also state whether the study was published and peer reviewed and whether Pfizer paid for the study. Pfizer must also, upon request, make a summary of the study or the full study available to consumers and health care professionals, as well as posting the study or a summary on its Internet site.

Besides Tennessee, the other 18 states involved in the investigation and settlement were Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Wisconsin.